

**Report of the Director of Environment & Neighbourhoods**

**Report to the Outer North East Area Committee**

**Date: Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

**Subject: Delegation of Environmental Services – Service Level Agreement**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes ALL	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

- a) A Service Level Agreement has been drawn up for the delivery of environmental services in Outer North East
- b) This report provides final details of the agreement and seeks approval of the document which will steer the work of the East North East Environmental Locality Team for the remainder of the 2011/12 municipal year

**Recommendations**

The Area Committee is asked to approve the attached Service Level Agreement for the delivery, influence and accountability of delegated environmental services.

## **Purpose of this report**

- 1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Area Committee, for approval, a final version of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) through which the work of the Environmental Locality team will be steered over the next eight months to the end of the current municipal year.

## **Background information**

- 2 Work has been ongoing with Members and Area Committees since late 2010 on achieving the successful delegation of certain environmental services in 2011/12.
- 3 At its meeting of 30<sup>th</sup> March 2011, the Executive Board approved revisions to the Area Committee Function Schedules to include a new delegated responsibility for Street Cleansing & Environmental Enforcement Services.
- 4 The delegation makes clear the responsibility of Area Committees to negotiate, develop and approve a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the service that achieves as a minimum, the service standards set by Executive Board. The SLA should determine the principles of deployment of the available resources by:
  - the identification of priorities for service delivery annually (both geographical and in terms of types of services delivered)
  - the agreement of the most appropriate approaches to be taken to achieve local environmental cleanliness and quality.
- 5 Services included in the delegation are:
  - Street cleansing (mechanical and manual);
  - Leaf clearing;
  - Litter bin emptying;
  - Dog warden services;
  - Littering & flytipping regulation;
  - Domestic & commercial waste (storage & transportation issues);
  - Highways enforcement (abandoned & nuisance vehicles, A-boards on pavements, mud on roads and placards on street furniture);
  - Graffiti enforcement; and
  - Overgrown vegetation controls.
- 6 The delegation of the specified environmental services to Area Committee will mean that service resources, mainly staffing, which are currently managed centrally, will be devolved. These resources have been organised into three wedge based teams for East North-East, South South-East and West North-West, aligned to the new Locality Teams. The Service Level Agreement sets out the detail of the resources which will be devolved to a locality level.
- 7 The SLA sets out the detail of resources at locality level and how they will be used to meet the Area Committee's responsibilities and local priorities.

## **Main issues**

- 8 A great deal of work has been undertaken over the past six months to review the street cleansing service, implement a restructure to create the three new locality teams and build trust with Members.
- 9 The completed review of street cleansing services, in particular mechanical sweeping, has looked in depth at a range of issues affecting productivity and overall effectiveness of the service.

## **Annual leave & sickness capacity**

- 10 Work has been undertaken to ensure a sound understanding of the capacity needed within the service to accommodate annual leave and sickness, something not previously factored into the delivery schedule. This has resulted in additional capacity being created within a revised service schedule, leading to a significant reduction in the number of sweeping routes not completed due to staff availability.

## **Downtime**

- 11 A primary concern highlighted by both officers and Members has been the extent to which 'downtime', i.e. the time machines are not actively sweeping, affects service delivery. A robust analysis has been carried out of travel time to/from depot to routes, the time involved in vehicles tipping their load during each route, the time spent at the start and finish of each day on vehicle preparation, i.e. washing down and refuelling, and identification of other issues affecting productive working time e.g. moving of bins off the carriageway so that the sweeping machines can gain access to the pavements/roads.
- 12 This work is still ongoing, but has already resulted in a number of additional tip sites being identified which will reduce unproductive work time. Discussions are underway to further minimise travel time by having more localised bases from which the vehicles will operate (currently all vehicles operate out of just two depots, Henshaw in the Outer North West and Cross Green in the Inner East/Inner South border).

## **Route completion rates**

- 13 A further element of the service that has been investigated is the completion rates of the individual sweeping blocks. Although specific data is not currently available to give a completely accurate figure, anecdotal evidence from frontline staff, service supervisors and Members strongly indicates a high rate of routes not being completed within a working day. In most instances the part of a route that did not get swept would be left until the next scheduled cleanse, potentially up to six weeks later.
- 14 The inability to complete a route has been assessed as being largely down to the size of the current routes, which were designed to be approximately 10 linear kilometres each. However, when taken into consideration that both pavement and road sweepers have to go up and down each side of a street this coverage is doubled. The most effective speed of a pavement sweeper is 2km an hour, thus to complete 20km would take 10 hours of productive cleaning.

- 15 As has been highlighted earlier there are a number of factors which mean that, out of a ten hour working day, the amount of productive cleaning time available falls short of this, meaning that historically the routes were not deliverable.
- 16 We have therefore sought to redesign the routes to make them deliverable within the current level of resources. Throughout the July workshops Elected Members have been consulted about a solution that effectively reduces the size of routes and makes them more achievable within the available productive time. This is achieved by splitting the cleaning block into two cycles, but incorporating the priority streets so that they get cleaned both visits/cycles. It is important to note that these details of routes can be changed at ward member meetings where capacity allows.

### **Outer North East principles and priorities**

- 17 Following the various workshops, meetings and papers a list of principles was drawn up in an attempt to capture the feedback from Members on how a new, delegated service should be planned and operated. These principles were discussed at the July Area Committee, subsequent ward member meetings and the Harewood and Wetherby Parish and Town Council Forum. No negative feedback was received and so the following principles form the basis for the proposed SLA, how it is proposed to develop the service/locality staff and the delegated service's accountability to the Area Committee:
- we will be focused on delivering the **best outcome for residents** across the Outer NE area in that the streets and neighbourhoods in which they live are of an acceptably clean standard
  - it is the **equality of standard** that every resident will be entitled to, not necessarily the same quantity of service
  - we will be **more responsive to local needs**. There needs to be greater capacity built in to react to current grotspots, plan for known local events that may effect the cleanliness of neighbourhoods (e.g. leaf fall, galas/village fairs, markets) and go where the problem is
  - a **common sense approach** which supports getting the job done. No cleaning of clean streets, more flexible routes/coverage, **no driving/walking past problems**
  - we will contribute as part of a "team neighbourhood" approach to tackling problems in the agreed **priority neighbourhood** of Moor Allerton (inc Lingfields)
  - we will **work better with Parish and Town Councils and other community based organisations** that add value to what we do and contribute towards making our streets and neighbourhood cleaner
  - we will have a better relationship with schools to reduce and **prevent litter on school routes**
  - we will have a clearer policy for the cleaning of shop frontages and **work in partnership with local businesses** to make local shopping centres/main streets clean and pleasant places to visit

- we will be more responsive to requests for **new litter bins or relocating existing ones**
- we will work in partnership with ENE Homes to make **more effective use of joint resources**
- **As a result of the workshops a number of key priorities have been identified by Area**

## **Corporate Considerations**

### **Consultation and engagement**

- 18 Various consultation and engagement exercises have been undertaken with Members on an individual basis, as well as at ward and Area Committee level.
- 19 Most significantly three rounds of Area Committee workshops have been held in January, March and July 2011, designed specifically to shape the delivery of environmental services within Outer North East wards. Attendance at the workshops was an average of five Members of the Committee being present at each session.
- 20 A series of update reports have been provided to each Area Committee meeting since October/November 2010 (see background documents for full details).
- 21 Progress reports have been submitted to each Area Chairs' meeting since October, including seeking comments and confirmation of a template for the Service Level Agreement.
- 22 The Locality Manager attended the Harewood and Wetherby Parish and Town Council Forum meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> July 2011. At this meeting he made a presentation explaining how the new delegation would work; including the new Locality Team, the services and responsibilities covered by the new team and the proposed principles to be included in the draft SLA to be presented to Area Committee. Members of the forum asked several questions relating to the proposed delegation/new service and raised issues regarding the current level of service.
- 23 Additional supporting information provided to Members as part of the consultation process has included a breakdown of the 2011/12 budget for the 3 new locality teams to demonstrate how resources have been allocated based on existing staffing, operational and equipment levels inherited from the previous Streetscene structure.

### **Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

- 24 A key principle of locality working and the Service Level Agreement is a focus on delivering the best outcome for residents across the area, so that the streets and neighbourhoods in which they live are of an acceptably clean standard. This principle underpins equality and community cohesion, seeking to bring neighbourhoods with poor environmental quality, up to an acceptable standard, whilst improving all areas of Leeds.

- 25 The ENE locality team will engage with the community via existing mechanisms as set out in the Area Committee's own Community Engagement Plan. This strategy has been developed with due consideration given to all equality, diversity, cohesion and integration issues.

### **Council policies and city priorities**

- 26 The proposed delegation of environmental services to Area Committees, via an approved Service Level Agreement, will significantly contribute towards the Stronger Leeds section of the new Safer & Stronger Communities Plan 2011-15. By delivering services at an Area Committee level, the priority to '*ensure that local neighbourhoods are clean*' will be much more achievable.
- 27 In order to formalise delegation of the listed environmental services, the Area Committee Function Schedule within the Council's Constitution has been amended, approved at Executive Board in March 2011 and ratified at the Annual Council meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2011.
- 28 Amendments have also been made to the Area Committee Procedure Rules to make allowance for the decision making powers being devolved to Committees, which will run concurrent to the same authority given to the Director of Environment & Neighbourhoods.

### **Resources and value for money**

- 29 There has been no changes to the proportion of resources to be spent in each locality. The only difference is for the first time budgets and therefore spending are split into localities and separated out from refuse/waste management costs. The resource allocated to the ENE Locality Team for 2011/12 is therefore the same as would have been spent in the area for those services under the previous Streetscene structure.
- 30 Appendix B of the SLA provides a summary of the initial budget that has been allocated to resource the ENE Locality Team in order for it to deliver the three SLAs in its area. It is hoped that further amounts will be devolved to a locality level once further financial work is completed on spend that has been historically only accounted for as one central "pot"/amount.
- 31 The Service Level Agreements include a revised mechanical street cleansing service, which will deliver increased efficiencies in terms of achieving a greater quality of street cleansing and therefore providing better value for money.

### **Legal implications, access to information and call in**

- 32 Following revision to the Council's Constitution, as detailed at 4.3.2, the Area Committee has the legal powers to approve the attached Service Level Agreement and therefore formally undertake the delegation of services set out within it.
- 33 There are no further legal implications. The report contains no information that is deemed exempt or confidential.

- 34 The Area Committee's decision to approve, or not, the attached Service Level Agreement is eligible for call-in, within the standard five working day period from the date the decision is published.

### **Risk management**

- 35 The Area Committee is being asked to approve the attached Service Level Agreement, which will formalise the partnership arrangements between the East North East Environmental Locality Team and the Committee. Should the Service Level Agreement not be approved then the Locality Team will still be required to deliver environmental services within the area, however this will be without the significant input of the Area Committee.

### **Conclusions**

- 36 A significant amount of collaborative work has been undertaken and real progress made in making ready for the services to operate under the terms of the SLA with effect from September 2011. This first SLA will apply to the end of the 2011/12 municipal year, during which time performance monitoring will be reported to the Area Committee and Cleaner Neighbourhoods Sub group.
- 37 The SLA will be reviewed annually to inform the production and approval of subsequent agreements for future years, in line with corporate budget cycle and review process, with the first review beginning in October 2011.

### **Recommendations**

- 38 The Area Committee is asked to:
- a) Note the contents of the report; and
  - b) Approve the attached Service Level Agreement.

### **Background documents**

- Leeds City Council Constitution
- Area Committee roles and functions 2011/12
- Area Committee report: Environmental Services Delegation – Update and Progress Report, 20<sup>th</sup> June 2011
- Area Chairs' Meeting report: Devolvement of Environmental Services to Area Committees – progress report, 15<sup>th</sup> April 2011
- Area Committee report: Delegation of Environmental Services, 14<sup>th</sup> March 2011
- Executive Board report: Delegation of Executive Functions in Relation to Streetscene Management to Area Committees, 30<sup>th</sup> March 2011
- Area Committee report: Delegation of Environmental Services, 31<sup>st</sup> January 2011
- Area Chairs' Meeting report: Devolvement of Environmental Services to Area Committees – Development of Service Level Agreements, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2011
- Area Chairs' Meeting report: Devolvement of Environmental Services to Area Committees, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2011
- Area Committee report: Briefing note on proposed delegation of elements of Streetscene services, Oct/Nov 2010